

In order to ensure viable seed, an entire group of spinach plants must be allowed to flower. Provide space for 20 plants, at least 12 inches apart. Seed set will occur on the female plants only.

Let seeds dry on the plants and gather seed from as many plants as possible. Harvest seed pods when they turn grey or beige, collecting closed pods to avoid scattering seeds. Fully dried seeds are hard, and will not dent with a thumbnail.

There are several methods to thresh seeds and remove chaff.

Small harvests can be threshed by rubbing seed pods between your hands or against the inside of a bucket, causing pods to break open.

For larger harvests, place seed stalks in large tubs or on tarps and tread on them. Discard stalks after seeds are dislodged.

Screen and winnow remaining material to remove chaff. After removing chaff, place in container.

Store spinach seed in dry, cool conditions up to one year for best germination results.

02-2020

## CREDITS

<https://www.seedsavers.org/gold-rush-organic-lettuce>

<https://www.seedsavers.org/grandma-hadleys-organic-lettuce>

<https://www.seedsavers.org/bloomsdale-organic-spinach>

<https://www.seedsavers.org/learn#growing-guides>

## RPLMN.ORG/SEED



Plan a seed.

**Backyard Bounty Urban  
Homesteading Meetup**

*History Center*  
of Olmsted County



# LETTUCE/ SPINACH

**Lettuce “Gold Rush”  
Looseleaf**

(*Lactuca sativa*)

**Lettuce “Grandma Hadley”  
Butterhead**

(*Lactuca sativa*)

**Spinach “Bloomsdale”**  
(*Spinacia oleracea*)



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## HOW TO GROW



Plant seeds in the garden or containers after last frost. Space rows 18-24 inches apart. Greens prefer cooler temperatures of spring and fall, but may be planted throughout the season to stagger or extend the harvest. Partial shade is preferred for plants in containers or when grown in high temperatures. Keep soil moist.

## HOW TO HARVEST

**Butterhead** lettuce is harvested whole when the head feels full and solid, 40-50 days after planting. Tip to the side and pull or slice off at ground level.

**Looseleaf** lettuce can be harvested by the head, but individual leaves pulled or cut from the outside of the plant allow new leaves to sprout.

**Spinach** leaves may be harvested individually or all at once when they reach 2-3 inches. Plants often re-sprout after harvest.

Harvest in early morning or evening and immerse in cool water to prevent wilting. Refrigerate in plastic bags with a paper towel to absorb moisture and help keep leaves dry.

When flower stems appear, lettuce changes flavor so taste-test leaves before harvesting. Leaves grown in hot conditions may become bitter. If too bitter, pull up plant and compost or allow plant to go to seed.

## HOW TO EAT

Serve lettuce or spinach fresh in sandwiches or salads. Combine many varieties for the best flavor.

Spinach can be sautéed and served with scrambled eggs or in soups. Spinach also makes a healthy addition to fruit smoothies.

## HOW TO SAVE SEED RATING: EASY WITH PRECAUTIONS

**Lettuce:** annual, self-pollinates.

In mid-summer allow some lettuce plants to grow a flower stalk and go to seed.

Choose the healthiest plants, spaced at least 12 inches apart. If saving seed from more than one variety, separate by at least 10 feet.

When seedpods turn grey, collect seed promptly to avoid wind scattering the seeds. Bagging the seed heads prevents seeds scattering if seed pods burst before picking.



Seedpods can be rubbed or shaken into bags or buckets to separate seed from pods. Use screening and winnowing techniques to remove chaff. Lettuce seed is viable for 5-6 years when stored in cool, dry conditions.

**Spinach:** annual, wind pollinated.

Grow only one variety of spinach at a time to avoid cross-pollination. Spinach plants are either male or female. You will have both when growing spinach.